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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002600

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [KG](#) [UZ](#) [AJ](#) [GG](#)

SUBJECT: DAS KENNEDY MAY 3 MEETING WITH TURKISH MFA DIRGEN AKINCI

(U) Classified by Ambassador Eric S. Edelman, E.O. 12958, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: Continuing their strategic dialogue begun in February in Washington, EUR DAS Kennedy met May 3 with Turkish MFA DG for Central Asia and the Caucasus Akinci. FM Gul travels to Kyrgyzstan May 5 and will encourage the Kyrgyz to avoid violence and prioritize their assistance requests. Turkey appears willing to work with the OSCE and to encourage the Kyrgyz to do so. Akinci said Turkey seeks "stability" in Central Asia, but this should not be taken to mean it opposes democratization. On Georgia, Kennedy encouraged the Turks to help promote reconciliation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Discussion on Armenia will be reported septel. End Summary.

Kyrgyzstan

2. (C) Akinci told DAS Kennedy FM Gul will travel to Kyrgyzstan May 5 to meet with "everyone," including the most viable presidential candidates. Gul's messages to all parties will be to avoid violence, focus on cooperation, prioritize requests for assistance (the head of TIKA, Turkey's AID-equivalent, will accompany Gul). Akinci said Turkey is ready to help with Kyrgyz elections within the OSCE framework, including sending observers. The Turks will also ask the Kyrgyz how they plan to compensate the losses of Turkish businesses looted in March (inter alia, he claimed a Turkish-owned hotel had been "confiscated"). Akinci promised to call Kennedy after Gul's visit. He said the Kyrgyz had suggested that international funds could be available to pay such claims. Kennedy said that we had sought to work closely with the Russians from the onset of the Kyrgyz crisis and to demonstrate that the OSCE could effectively represent Russia's interests, such as OSCE's focus on protection of national minorities.

3. (C) DAS Kennedy noted that TIKA and AID can usefully offer assistance to Kyrgyzstan. She agreed the Kyrgyz needed to prioritize their requests, but suggested we should help them think through this. She welcomed Turkey's willingness to work with the OSCE. She urged that FM Gul reinforce the OSCE's importance with the Kyrgyz on his upcoming trip (including gaining timely Kyrgyz endorsement of the OSCE work plan), she encouraged the GOT to help convince the Russians to support the OSCE's mission, and she asked that the GOT consider contributing financially to the OSCE work plan.

4. (C) Akinci predicted Russia will not object to the work of NGOs, including the OSCE, in Kyrgyzstan because extreme nationalists threatened foreigners there, including Russians. As they are wont to do, the Russians were simply objecting in order to lay down a marker, he asserted.

Central Asia and Democratization

5. (C) Akinci said if events similar to those in Kyrgyzstan spread to other Central Asian countries, the unrest would not be as abrupt or violent as in Kyrgyzstan. Any changes in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan will come from the top, not the people, he asserted, and take the form of struggles "between clans." Akinci worried about where any sudden change in Uzbekistan would lead, claiming (without demonstrating any solid analytic basis) that, for several reasons, including "historically", Islam there is "not peaceful."

6. (C) "Revolts do not always yield "the desired results," Akinci tried to warn. Turkey seeks "stability" everywhere, but this creates the mistaken impression Turkey does not want democracy. Turkey does want democracy, Akinci asserted, but "reasonable people" can differ about the best way to reach it. Kennedy noted democracy and stability are not antithetical ("correct, in the long term," Akinci replied), and we should all support reforms. She hoped Turkey would encourage Central Asian governments to not oppose NGOs that are trying to bring reform. Akinci gave no sign of willingness to do so.

Nagorno-Karabakh

17. (C) Akinici asked for an update on the Minsk Group. Trying to deprecate the process, Akinici noted the Armenians and Azeris had only had proximity talks in London. Kennedy responded that the engagement had been serious and the two Presidents may meet at the COE Summit. She urged Turkey to encourage President Aliyev to move forward on Nagorno-Karabakh.

Georgia

18. (C) Akinici said Turkey's Ambassador to Georgia is awaiting a "green light" from the Georgian government and Abkhaz "officials" to visit Abkhazia. Kennedy noted the recent Georgia/Abkhazia talks in Geneva had been successful in bringing Georgian and Abkhaz representatives together, but progress was limited. Russia had taken negative steps recently, conducting military exercises in Abkhazia and holding a "convention" of separatist leaders. Kennedy said she hoped Turkey would encourage the Russians to promote reconciliation in Georgia, not separatism, including in South Ossetia where the Georgians were offering substantial autonomy. She encouraged the GOT to support the proposal for ferry service between Abkhazia and Trabzon, Turkey.

19. (C) In stiff-arming the suggestion that the GOT support the ferry service proposal, Akinici tried to lay out a situation in which, he claimed, Turkey's sizable Abkhaz-origin population considers Turkey too pro-Georgian, while the GoG considers Turkey too pro-Abkhaz. Perhaps that means our policy is correct, he joked. Turkey considers Georgian territorial integrity "sacred," he claimed, but all sides need to ask themselves pragmatically how to make life easier for their people. He worried that the conflict will become "ossified" if the present impasse continues, and that President Saakashvili will be tempted to use force to try to solve it. Kennedy said we would remind Putin of our insistence that Georgians eschew military force; in turn Russia must actively participate in the political process to resolve the conflicts.

110. (C) Kennedy said Russia should help the parties reach a solution. Akinici defended as reasonable Russia's demand to keep its "privileges" in Abkhazia, including port access and land ownership. Akinici added that recent Georgian behavior toward Ajara made Abkhazians doubt they could obtain true autonomy from the GoG.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation

111. (C) Kennedy expressed USG disappointment that our application for BSEC observer status has not been accepted and asked Akinici why and whether Turkey had spoken in support as it had promised. Akinici temporized and blamed the Russians. Pressed, he urged that the U.S. be "patient" and claimed it was "not correct" that Turkey had not supported U.S. observer status.

112. (U) This cable was cleared by EUR/DAS Laura Kennedy.
EDELMAN